

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1058

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Judiciary, March 25, 2009

Title: An act relating to editorial standards for the publication of the Revised Code of Washington.

Brief Description: Revising editorial standards for the RCW.

Sponsors: Representatives Goodman and Rodne; by request of Statute Law Committee.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/27/09, 94-0.

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 3/25/09 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; McCaslin, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Hargrove, Kohl-Welles, Roach and Tom.

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) is the compilation of all permanent laws now in force. The official version of the RCW is published by the Statute Law Committee (Committee) or the Code Reviser, acting with Committee approval, on an annual basis. The online version of the RCW is updated twice a year, once in the early fall following the legislative session and again at the end of the year to allow for any amendments by ballot measures passed at the general election.

Under current law, the Code Reviser is authorized to make specified nonsubstantive editorial revisions to the code. These editorial revisions include making capitalization, chapter, section, and subsection divisions uniform throughout the code or omitting titles of acts and declarations of emergencies.

As a matter of current practice, the Code Reviser provides a disclaimer clause in all bills containing section captions, part headings, subheadings, tables of contents, and indexes notifying the reader that these provisions are not part of the law and will not be included in the text of the RCW when the law is codified.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: The Code Reviser is authorized to alphabetize definition sections when it will not change the meaning or effect of the sections. The authority of the Code Reviser to divide long sections into two or more sections is removed.

The editorial powers of the Code Reviser are amended to allow the omission of severability clauses when the clause is not necessary to preserve the full intent of the law. The Code Reviser may also remove annotations that have appeared in the RCW for more than ten years, unless the annotation is necessary to preserve the full intent of the law. Annotations removed under this authority must be retained and available in the electronic copy of the RCW, available on the Code Reviser's website.

Section captions, part headings, subheadings, tables of contents, and indexes appearing in legislative bills are not considered any part of the law and the Code Reviser is authorized to omit these provisions from the RCW unless it is necessary to retain such provisions to preserve the full intent of the law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will save the state almost \$50,000. This bill also saves paper by removing the requirement that the Code Reviser include certain information in the code, information that cumulatively adds a great deal of length to the statutes.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Goodman, prime sponsor.